The WATCHTOWER

Announcing JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

APRIL 1, 1967
Semimonthly

THE PATTERN OF JUDGMENT

GOD'S JUDGMENT MAKES MANIFEST THE TRULY RICH

HOW WE KNOW WE LIVE IN THE "LAST DAYS"

HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN YOUR DECISION TO SERVE GOD?

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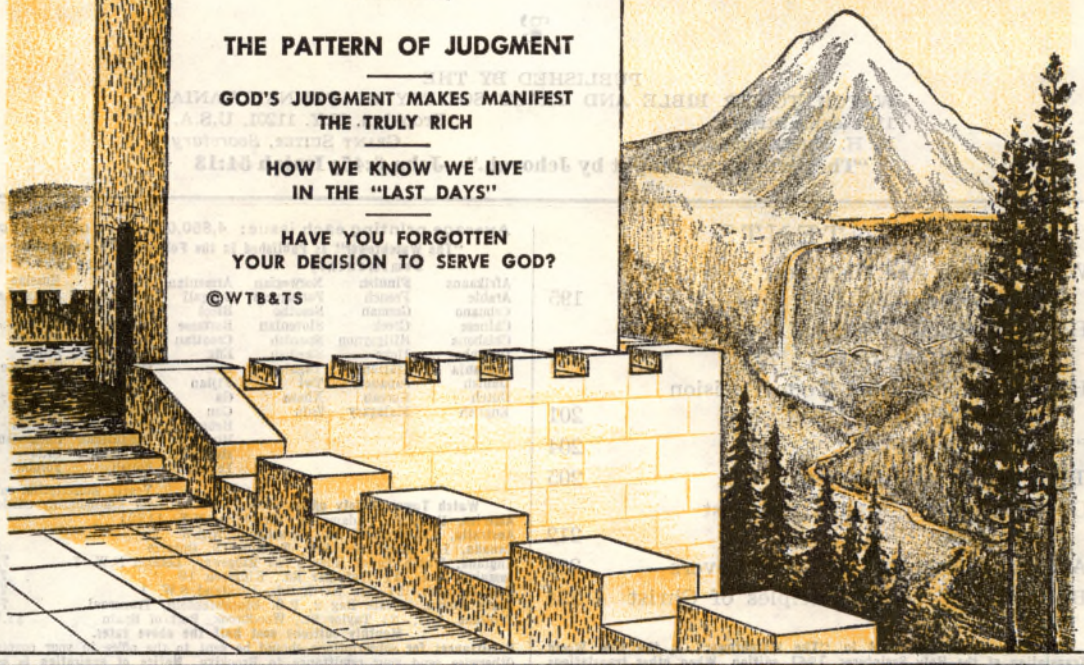

"YOU ARE MY WITNESSES," SAYS JEHOVAH.—Isa. 43:12

THE PURPOSE OF "THE WATCHTOWER"

Every watchtower has its purpose. It serves as an elevated place for a wide-awake person with sharp vision. It enables him to see far ahead into the distance and tell those below for whom he is a watchman what is drawing near, whether it is a danger against which to prepare or it is something good over which to be glad with strong faith and hope.

Because of having the name "The Watchtower" this magazine justly has to render a similar useful service to the people of all nations. This is an international magazine and makes no racial distinctions, for we are all facing a common world danger; we are all hoping for a common good.

Ever since "The Watchtower" began to be published in July of 1879 it has looked ahead into the future, always striving to aid its readers to advance in knowledge and to gain a clearer picture of the glorious new order of things that is in store for righteous mankind. No, "The Watchtower" is no inspired prophet, but it follows and explains a Book of prophecy the predictions in which have proved to be unerring and unfailing till now. "The Watchtower" is therefore under safe guidance. It may be read with confidence, for its statements may be checked against that prophetic Book.

Among the many nations of today there are hundreds of differing religions. Which one does this magazine present? Not the confused religions of Christendom, but the religion of the oldest sacred Book on earth. Which Book? The Sacred Bible of the Holy Scriptures, written by inspiration in the name of the Creator of heaven and earth, the only living and true God.

The sacred, nonpolitical purpose of "The Watchtower" is accordingly to encourage and promote study of the Holy Bible and to give our many readers the needed unsectarian help to understand that Book of true religion and infallible prophecy. Thus this magazine will be helping them to prove worthy of perfect life and happiness in God's promised new order under His everlasting kingdom of righteousness.

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"They will all be taught by Jehovah."—John 6:45; Isaiah 54:13

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Announcing JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM
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WHEN OTHERS ARE Dishonest

WHAT ABOUT YOU?

"NOBODY is honest," was the harsh judgment of Lincoln M. Zonn, New York lie-detector specialist. "Diogenes never found an honest man and neither have I," he said. Do you agree with Zonn? The distressing fact is that there is more and more evidence to support the conclusion that people in general are becoming increasingly dishonest. What about you?

Norman Bell, Toronto (Canada) manager of Pinkerton's national detective agency, said: "In our investigations we've found, as an average, that one out of every three employees is basically dishonest—which means he will seek ways of stealing; that one out of every three employees will be dishonest if given the opportunity and the third employee is the only one who deserves the full trust of his employer." What about you? Where do you fit among these statistics? Are you basically honest?

It has been found that dishonesty is quite contagious. The immoralities of a single individual can weaken the inner restraints of many, through the deadly rationalization that "everybody is doing it." Here the Bible principle holds true: "A little leaven ferments the whole lump." (1 Cor. 5:6) For example, in companies where higher-ups were discovered stealing, researchers found that other employees copied their nefarious behavior right down the line. Private investigator John Jurens stated that in companies where he found company presidents stealing, "everybody was stealing." Would you permit this to influence your morality? If the president and other officials where you work were dishonest, would you remain honest notwithstanding?

Dishonesty becomes an overwhelming temptation to many persons when others seem to be getting away with it. (Eccl. 8:11) A Chicago electronics firm hired two watchmen on nights and weekends to protect a warehouse, which was stocked with radios and recorders. The two guards turned the place into a Sunday-afternoon bargain center. Customers, with the proper password, flocked to the warehouse and were given free run of the place to select the models of their choice at a flat rate of one for $25 or two for $35. The firm lost $300,000 in nine months before the watchmen were apprehended. The guards were corrupt themselves and they corrupted others. Still some "customers" did not regard what they were doing as dishonest. What about you? Do you think it is right to purchase stolen property?

In Toronto a hotel owner recently discovered that fourteen of his employees had banded together and stolen money, food, liquor, linen, typewriters, furniture and other hotel property, with a total value of $36,000. One person said: "It became a habit." A supermarket operator in America discovered that "90 percent of his employees were taking home $1 or $2 a week either in cash or merchandise." "Everybody was doing it, so why not me?" was the reaction of some employees.

People justified their actions by saying to themselves, "The company owes it to me, because they didn't give me a raise." Or they would neutralize their dishonesty by saying, "Everybody does it." They also played down their guilt as embezzlers with attitudes like, "It's the right of every good employee to take home so many power tools a year." The impersonality of bigness also loomed as a contributing factor to dishonesty. Some distinguished between a supermarket and a neighborhood delicatessen. Said one undergraduate: "A lot of people steal from supermarkets, but nobody steals from the deli [delicatessen] because you know the guy depends on you not to." Because of the impersonality of the supermarket, the dishonest person may reason, "After all, I'm not hurting anybody in particular." Do you feel that way?

Little do dishonest persons realize that they are hurting a lot of people with their dishonesty and, chief of all, themselves. American business is hurt to a total of $5,000,000,000 a year from kickbacks, payoffs and bribes. White-collar employees steal about $4,000,000 every working day. Some 250 firms yearly in America are forced out of business due to fraud and theft alone. Who says dishonesty does not hurt anyone? Supermarkets suffer an estimated annual loss of $100,000,000 due to employee malpractices. This loss cancels every penny of profit that would result from $5,000,000,000 worth of sales. Food industry sources estimate that dollars lost annually either through theft or opened packages no longer salable range from $330,000,000 to $3,000,000,000. Shoppers pay for dishonesty in higher costs. And higher prices hurt!

What about the damage done to one's own moral fiber? A measure of self-worth, self-respect, is lost every time one is dishonest. There is a loss of goodness and appreciation of what belongs to others. The conscience becomes seared and its real value is lost.

There is also a loss of confidence and trust once others find you dishonest, and not to have the confidence of others hurts. Dishonesty can cut deep into the family relationship and damage it beyond repair. Are you willing to pay that price for dishonesty?

There is also the effect dishonesty may have on the morals of others. One's stealing from the supermarket may mean a steak on the table, but it also may mean destroying the morals of one's children, causing them to cheat in school and steal from others, which is a terrible price to pay for a steak.

Think, too, what dishonesty can do to one's relationship with God. It can wreck it permanently, causing one to lose out on life everlasting. Do you think dishonesty is worth that price?

Where dishonesty and wrongdoing load a person with invisible chains of guilt, the consciousness of right-doing exhilarates and strengthens one. It fills one with self-respect, with moral strength to do the right thing. So when others are dishonest, if you are wise, you will do the right and honest thing.

HOW WE KNOW we live in the "LAST DAYS"

An entire system of things is to pass away. How can we be certain it is in our day?

THE "last" of anything means the final part, the finish, the end. For example, the last day of the week means the final twenty-four hours that bring the week to a conclusion.

When the Bible speaks of the "last days," it has reference, not just to days of a week, but to something far greater. When 2 Timothy 3:1 states that "in the last days critical times hard to deal with will be here," it refers to a period of time marked by catastrophic events world wide. It means that all elements of this system of things, the political, the military, the economic, the social and the religious, would be nearing their cataclysmic finish.

As the last day of a week has a definite beginning and a definite end, so the "last days" of this entire sytem of things have a definite beginning and a definite end. During that limited span of time world events are to build rapidly toward a climax. That climax will come when God himself brings to an end this wicked system and replaces it with one that is good. The Bible promises: "There are new heavens and a new earth that we are awaiting according to his promise, and in these righteousness is to dwell."—2 Pet. 3:8-13.

HOW WOULD WE KNOW?

But how can we know when the world has reached its "last days"? Apart from Bible chronology, is there any way to determine for a certainty which period of time will see the end of this present system of things?

In the first century the disciples of Jesus wanted to know that too, so they pointedly asked him what would be the sign "of the conclusion of the system of things." (Matt. 24:3) In answer, Jesus enumerated many of the momentous events that would take place. These events would come together within one generation to identify the "last days" clearly. They would be like the different lines that make up a person's fingerprint, a print that cannot belong to any other person. The "last days" contain their own unique grouping of marks, or events, forming a positive "fingerprint" that cannot belong to any other time period.

When the many factors are put together, we find that *our* generation, *our* day is the one that is identified in the Bible as the "last days." In fact, in this year 1967 we are actually living in the *final part* of that time! This can be compared to, not just the last day of a week, but, rather, the last part of that last day.

1914 BEGINS THE "LAST DAYS"

Before describing the "last days," Jesus cautioned: "You are going to hear of wars and reports of wars; see that you are not terrified. For these things must take place, but the end is not yet." (Matt. 24:6) True to his words, there were many disturbances among nations during the centuries

that followed, and the simple fact is that the "last days" did not come during that time.

Then Jesus related some of the events that would mark the "last days." He stated: "Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom." Following this "there will be great earthquakes, and in one place after another pestilences and food shortages." (Luke 21:10, 11) What was Jesus telling his future followers? To look for a disastrous war the dimensions of which were unheard of in history, one that would be accompanied quickly by other disasters, such as disease, food shortages and earthquakes.

Which war was Jesus speaking about? World War I! It was the first war to fill the description he gave, for it included, not just nations, but entire kingdoms, indeed, the entire world. Speaking of World War I, *Life* magazine stated: "It killed more men than any previous war, and it was the first war to suck in whole nations, including civilians."[1]

No previous war in history compared with it. It was so different that historians of that time called it The Great War. Of it, an encyclopedia states: "World War I took the lives of twice as many men as all major wars from 1790 to 1913 put together." It noted that total military casualties were over 37,000,000, and added: "The number of civilian deaths in areas of actual war totaled about 5,000,000. Starvation, disease, and exposure accounted for about 80 of every 100 of these civilian deaths. Spanish influenza, which some persons blamed on the war, caused tens of millions of other deaths."[2] World War! Pestilences! Food shortages! Just as Jesus foretold!

Yes, 1914 marked the "beginning of pangs of distress," as Jesus declared. (Matt. 24:8) It was the dividing line, the start of the "last days," as can be noted from the statements of many authorities. On the anniversary of World War I the London *Evening Star* commented that the conflict "tore the whole world's political setup apart. Nothing could ever be the same again. If we all get the nuclear madness out of our systems and the human race survives, some historian in the next century may well conclude that the day the world went mad was August 4, 1914."[3]

Former chancellor of West Germany Konrad Adenauer spoke of the time "before 1914 when there was real peace, quiet and security on this earth—a time when we didn't know fear. . . . Security and quiet have disappeared from the lives of men since 1914. And peace? Since 1914, the Germans have not known real peace nor has much of mankind."[4] Similarly, former president of the United States Dwight D. Eisenhower said: "A deterioration has been going on since the first World War."[5]

Also, as Jesus foretold, after 1914 a series of earthquakes rocked the globe, causing more damage and casualties than ever before. In 1915, at Avezzano, Italy, 30,000 were killed. In 1920, 180,000 died in Kansu, China. In 1923, 143,000 perished in Japan. And earthquakes have continued to occur with frightening intensity, taking a toll of lives greater than in any other period of human history. Now almost every year sees a major tragedy due to earthquakes. Just since 1960 there have been devastating earthquakes in Morocco, Chile, Iran, Yugoslavia, Alaska, Turkey and other areas. Clearly it makes up another mark of the "fingerprint" of these "last days."

MORE TO COME

However, the events that took place in connection with World War I were, as Jesus said, only the "beginning" of the "last days." Much more was to come. And it did.

Note what one history source says: "World War I and its aftermath led to the greatest economic depression in history during the early 1930's. The consequences of the war and the problems of adjustment to peace led to unrest in almost every nation." All of this led directly to World War II. How costly was it? "World War II killed more persons, cost more money, damaged more property, affected more people, and probably caused more far-reaching changes than any other war in history. . . . It has been estimated that the number of war dead, civilian and military, totaled more than 22,000,000. The number of wounded has been estimated as more than 34,000,000."[6]

That is a total of 56,000,000 casualties, almost 20,000,000 more than in World War I! Truly, the "pangs of distress" were becoming more acute as the "last days" moved toward their end.

This is also true of other catastrophes, such as food shortages. During and after World War II "more died of starvation" than in World War I, says the same source. It adds: "The war left millions in Europe and Asia without adequate food, shelter, or clothing. They lacked fuel, machinery, raw materials, and money. Their farms lay devastated. Infant mortality and disease were high."[7]

Nor have such conditions eased. In India today, says *U.S. News & World Report* of December 27, 1965, "a natural calamity almost unprecedented in modern times is facing this nation. Widespread famine, of *a kind not* seen in the world in this generation, is expected as the inevitable consequence unless outside aid can come."

VIOLENCE, IMMORALITY, DEGENERACY

Jesus also said there would be an "increasing of lawlessness." (Matt. 24:12) The apostle Paul foretold juvenile delinquency, violence, corruption and selfishness gone to seed: "In the last days . . . men will be lovers of themselves, . . . disobedient to parents, . . . without self-control, fierce, without love of goodness, . . . lovers of pleasures rather than lovers of God, . . . wicked men and impostors will advance from bad to worse."—2 Tim. 3: 1-5, 13.

The record of our time, verified in the daily news headlines, shouts out that these things are happening right now! Note this report: "Fighting that sometimes resembled guerrilla warfare raged in the streets of American cities . . . A wave of crime and rioting is sweeping across the United States . . . In many cities, women are afraid to go out after dark. And they have good reason. Rapes, assaults, sadistic outbursts of senseless violence are on the rise. Crimes often seem to be committed out of sheer savagery . . . Respect for law and order is declining."[8]

This is not confined to one country. Reports from all over the world are the same. From the Philippines: "No Filipino is safe in the streets today. . . . thrill killing, vandalism, and general mayhem is steadily increasing."[9] South Korea: "We can't have even one day of peaceful life in Seoul because in the evenings the streets become streets of terror."[10] Sweden: "These critical situations that are a worry to all are expected to become even more severe."[11] England: "General lawlessness is greater —a breakdown of the sense of duty and of obligation and truthfulness."[12] And the Communist countries? "Almost everywhere, including Soviet Russia, there appears to be an increase in crime, and particularly, alas, in juvenile crime."[13]

What is happening all over the world is just as the head of the Federal Bureau of Investigation in the United States said of his land: "Citizens of this country ought to be able to walk all the streets of our cities without being mugged, raped,

or robbed. But we can't do that today. All through the country, almost without exception, this condition prevails."[14]

And immorality is sweeping the world like a forest fire. In the United States the number of children born out of wedlock has more than doubled since 1945. In Latin America the rates are many times higher. "For every 1,000 live births, 716 are illegitimate in Guatemala, 613 in El Salvador, 739 in Panama and 240 in Argentina."[15] "Uruguay produced a figure of three abortions for every live birth."[16]

In Great Britain editor and author Malcolm Muggeridge said: "The position of this country . . . in my opinion, is absolutely ghastly." When asked about the rebellion of British youth against the old values, he replied: "I think it's sheer degeneracy. . . . They're just degenerate . . . the antics of an exhausted stock."[17] Another source reported: "The collapse of private morality in Britain is becoming the talk of a wondering world."[18]

ANGUISH OF NATIONS

A dean of American education told a meeting of teachers that the human race today is "just about lost." He added: "All the things that happened since 1914 are things that 'just couldn't happen' and we will see a lot more of them."[19]

Hence, what has happened since the "last days" began in 1914 is just as Jesus foretold: "On the earth anguish of nations, not knowing the way out . . . men become faint out of fear and expectation of the things coming upon the inhabited earth." (Luke 21:25, 26) Of this very fear, columnist David Lawrence states: "The fact is that today the biggest single emotion which dominates our lives is fear."[20]

And little wonder, for aside from skyrocketing violence, crime, hunger, disease and immorality, mankind has another dread. The New York *Times* reported the United States Secretary of Defense as saying that "more than 120 million Americans would die in the event of a Soviet missile attack . . . If it were to include urban centers, . . . the death toll would be 149 million."[21]

There is no escaping it. All the lines of the "fingerprint" are there to show conclusively that we have been in the "last days" since 1914, over fifty-two years now! And calling attention to this is not calamity howling. The near end of this system of things and the establishment of God's kingdom are facts that God himself is having proclaimed throughout the world today, thus fulfilling another mark of the "last days," for Jesus said that this message "will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations; and then the end will come."—Matt. 24:14.

Hence, do not be deceived by this world's propaganda that promises a bright tomorrow for this system. God promises its end. Whom are you going to believe? For your everlasting happiness listen, learn and then do what God requires of you, for "the world is passing away and so is its desire, but he that does the will of God remains forever."—1 John 2:17.

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Have You Forgotten Your Decision to Serve God?

WERE you not thrilled when you investigated and first began to understand the truth of God's Word? Did your heart not rejoice at God's provision for everlasting life in a new system of things? An understanding of God's purposes can truly move the heart, resulting in a personal decision or dedication to serve God. Have you made such a decision, and symbolized it by water baptism? While hundreds of thousands of Christians have, unfortunately many of these have failed to remember their solemn dedication. We are deeply concerned about them.

The apostle Paul wrote about some of such persons during his second imprisonment in Rome, saying: "All the men in the district of Asia have turned away from me. Phygelus and Hermogenes are of that number." (2 Tim. 1:15) For one reason or another these Asian Christians left Paul *and ceased* their Christian activity. Circumstances arose that caused them to forget their decision to serve God.

Today there are even greater pressures to turn a Christian from his dedication to God. Within this very generation Satan the Devil has been cast out of heaven, and he is now waging war against those "who observe the commandments of God and have the work of bearing witness to Jesus." (Rev. 12:7-12, 17) Has his war strategy succeeded against you? Has he gotten a hold on you and stifled your public praise? Have you forgotten your decision to serve God? If so, it is vital that you quickly avail yourself of God's help to free yourself from Satan's grip.

As a first step, recall to mind the initial joy and happiness that you realized when learning the truth. Where, now, is that happiness you had? The apostle Paul asked this very question of certain Christians in his day, and added: "You were running well. Who hindered you from keeping on obeying the truth? This sort of persuasion is not from the One calling you." (Gal. 5:7, 8; 4:15) No, it is from the Devil and his agents! And that persuasion is designed to cause you to forget God and to lead you into destruction. So bestir yourself before it is too late! Satan knows his end is near; do not let him cause your end too.

MISPLACED LOVE

Just as love for God and his provisions prompted your decision to serve Him, so love for something else can cause you to forget that decision. It has happened many times before. During Paul's first imprisonment in Rome one of his close associates and fellow ministers was Demas, whose greetings Paul passed along in his Christian letters. (Col. 4:14; Philem. 24) However, during Paul's second imprisonment Demas turned away from Paul. Why? Paul told Timothy: "Because he loved the present system of things."—2 Tim. 4:10.

Has a similar love developed in you? Is this what has taken you away from Christian meetings and association with the brothers? It can so easily happen, and for this reason

the apostle John recorded the divine warning: "Do not be loving either the world or the things in the world. . . . because everything in the world—the desire of the flesh and the desire of the eyes and the showy display of one's means of life—does not originate with the Father, but originates with the world. Furthermore, the world is passing away."—1 John 2:15-17.

What is the evidence that one is succumbing to "the desire of the eyes" and is attaching importance to "the showy display of one's means of life"? It usually begins almost imperceptibly. At first, perhaps, only a few extra expenses are unnecessarily incurred, and this results in only occasionally missing congregation meetings. Then further debts are assumed, requiring more time to pay for them, and leaving less time for study and meetings. Finally, serving God is completely thrown out to make room for other interests. Like thorns, Jesus said, "the deceptive power of riches and the desires for the rest of the things make inroads and choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful."—Mark 4:18, 19.

Did you notice what Jesus said can make you unfruitful as a Christian? Not only possessing riches, or enjoying "the pleasure of being wealthy" (Matt. 13:22, *NW* footnote, 1950 Edition); but, much more often, *"the DESIRES for the rest of the things"* cause unfruitfulness. Desires for new clothes, new TV's, new cars, new houses, new appliances—an endless number of such things. Has satisfying these desires so absorbed your time and energies that you have not attended a meeting in several months or more? It is indeed a serious matter to make a vow to do Jehovah's will, and then forget it.—Eccl. 5:4-6.

If the "thorns" of materialistic desires have hindered you from obeying the truth, it would be wise to examine yourself, asking: 'Am I more contented and satisfied since leaving the Christian congregation and slipping into inactivity? Is my family life more wholesome, are relations pleasanter and is everyone happier? Or could the apostle Paul's question appropriately be directed at me, "Where, then, is that happiness you had?" ' (Gal. 4:15) Do we truly rejoice at the fulfillment of the Bible prophecies, which show the closeness of the end of this wicked system of things? (Luke 21:28) Very likely genuine happiness and contentment have diminished. What, then, is the wise course to take?

OVERCOMING MATERIALISTIC DESIRES

It is evident. It is the course that initially acquainted you with God's purposes and thrilled your heart. Yes, you can rekindle your joy in the same way that it was first realized: By means of a regular Bible study in your home and through association with your Christian brothers. Accept the invitation for such a study. Attend the congregation meetings. It is what you need to regain the happiness and contentment you once realized.

Perhaps you feel somewhat like the family who had been in the truth for twenty-two years but then, as they admitted, "were drawn into the world by materialism." They wrote: "We often felt we wanted to attend the meetings but it just seemed as if we couldn't make it. We didn't really fit into Satan's system, so we were completely disconnected, isolated between the new and the old systems of things. Although wanting and needing our brothers, we always felt we had to dodge them, and this left us frustrated and depressed. We needed words of encouragement."

Do you, too, at times, feel the need of encouraging words? If so, will you be humble enough to accept them when they are

offered? This family was, and they write: "We gladly accepted the provision of a Bible study in our home. Now we are all back in Jehovah's secure organization. I cannot express the happiness I feel. Our entire home is governed according to Bible principles. We have learned from our experience how necessary it is to apply all instructions from the Society, have a family Bible study and do our Bible reading daily."

Do not deprive yourself of the happiness and contentment enjoyed among God's people. You also can realize it again. One person, who had left off association with the congregation years before, recently attended a Bible study, and reported: "My mind went back to the time when I studied, and really, I had not known true contentment or inward joy since then." Next he went to the Kingdom Hall, and he could not get over "the cordial atmosphere and the love and kindness of the brothers."

You, too, will receive this same warm welcome at the congregation meetings. The brothers will be genuinely happy to see you again. So do not wait; go to a meeting this very week! Do not allow the thorns of materialistic desire to continue to choke off Christian fruitage from your life.

OPPOSITION FROM FRIENDS OR RELATIVES

On the other hand, is it opposition from friends or relatives that has caused you to forget your decision to serve God? Think, now. Did you agree to serve God only if you had no opposition? Are you going to allow what others say to cause you to cease attending Christian meetings and to stop following Jesus' example of ministering to others?

It would be wise to give careful attention to what Christ said in this connection: "Whoever disowns me before men, I will also disown him before my Father who is in the heavens. Do not think I came to put peace upon the earth; I came to put, not peace, but a sword. For I came to cause division, with a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a young wife against her mother-in-law. Indeed, a man's enemies will be persons of his own household. He that has greater affection for father or mother than for me is not worthy of me; and he that has greater affection for son or daughter than for me is not worthy of me. And whoever does not accept his torture stake and follow after me is not worthy of me."—Matt. 10:33-38.

From what Jesus said, it is evident that true Christians must expect family opposition, is it not? Yes, indeed! So, really, if your friends or relatives oppose true worship, the sincerity of your decision to walk in Jesus' footsteps is put to the test.

You may somehow reason that keeping peaceful relations with these persons is a demonstration of love and, therefore, justifies quitting true worship. But is abandoning God's service really showing love for the ones closest to you? If you quit when opposition arises, how will friends and loved ones be helped to appreciate that accurate knowledge of the Bible is of life-or-death importance? Actually, genuine love for them is shown by enduring their opposition and resolutely living up to your decision to serve God. You will thus afford your friends and relatives the best possible opportunity to learn the truths from God's Word and to come in line for the everlasting blessings that Jehovah holds out to those who serve him.

True, this may be difficult. But do not fail to appreciate that it is Satan the Devil who is inspiring the persecution. So be courageous! As the apostle Peter said: "Take your stand against him, solid in the faith, knowing that the same things in the way of sufferings are being accomplished

in the entire association of your brothers in the world." (1 Pet. 5:9) Yes, Satan is using the same tactics on your brothers elsewhere, and they are standing faithfully! You can too. Prove it by getting back in the Christian race. Go to the congregation meetings! Do not put it off!

OTHER ATTEMPTS TO CAUSE YOU TO FORGET

There are many other ways in which Satan the Devil endeavors to stumble Christians and make them forget their decision to serve God. For example, someone in the congregation may say or do something that causes one to take personal offense. And instead of straightening out the trouble in the Scripturally prescribed way, the offended one allows the matter to become such a big issue in his mind that he leaves the Christian congregation.

But think: Is it pleasing to Jehovah God to permit anyone or anything to interfere with your service to him or your relationship with his organization? Most definitely not! So do not allow such attempts of Satan to cause you to forget God and his service. You have nothing to gain and everything to lose by staying away from congregation meetings and the association with your brothers.

A Christian cannot afford to be ignorant of Satan's designs, and one of his most successful tactics is to cause discouragement. (2 Cor. 2:11) For example, one minister recently quit the ministry, explaining that the reason was that there simply was no response to the Kingdom message. Although this may be true, and even if people become increasingly cold toward God, is this reason to quit? Consider the ministry of the prophet Jeremiah to his unresponsive, stiff-necked countrymen, of whom Jehovah said: "You must speak to them all these words, but they will not listen to you; and you must call to them, but they will not answer you."—Jer. 7:27.

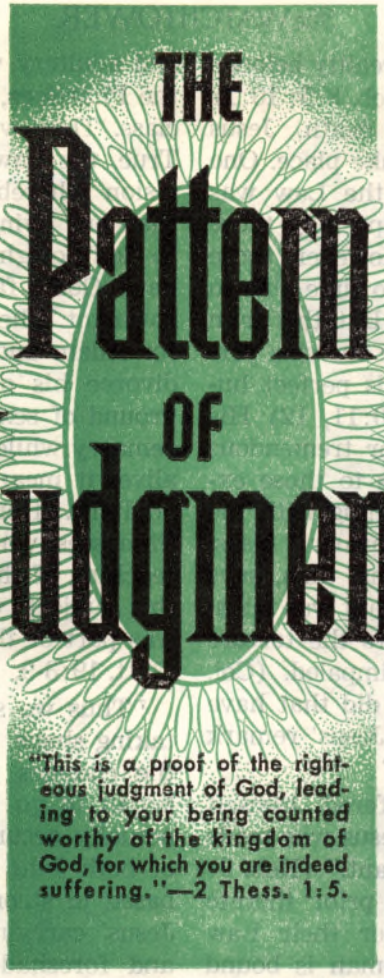
Although those Israelites were extremely cold toward God, Jeremiah faithfully continued preaching to them for some forty years. He got discouraged, true, and he thought about quitting, but his love of God's truth impelled him to continue serving. He did not forget his decision to serve God. (Jer. 20:9) Copy that example, and if, for any reason, you have slowed down or abandoned God's service, bestir yourself quickly and continue running the race for life. Do not allow Satan to have the satisfaction of causing you to go down into destruction. Take your stand against him! Assemble regularly with your brothers at congregation meetings! There you will find warm encouragement and the needed protection.

"Keeping Awake"

The Hebrew name for the almond tree (*shaqéd*) literally means "the waker." This is quite fitting since the almond is one of the earliest trees to bloom following the winter rest, blossoming as early as late January or early February in Palestine.

In the Bible, at Jeremiah 1:11, 12, there is a play on words where the word "almond" (*shaqéd*) is followed by the expression "keeping awake" (*shoqed*): "The word of Jehovah continued to occur to me, saying: 'What are you seeing, Jeremiah?' So I said: 'An offshoot of an almond tree is what I am seeing.' And Jehovah went on to say to me: 'You have seen well, for I am keeping awake concerning my word in order to carry it out.' "

THE Pattern OF Judgment



JOHN THE BAPTIST began his ministry by preaching: "Repent, for the kingdom of the heavens has drawn near." He lost no time in gathering disciples around him who shared in the blessings of his ministry, preparing them to be "counted worthy of the kingdom of God." At the same time he told the unworthy religious leaders that a time of judgment was impending, that "already the ax is lying at the root of the trees," and that the coming one "will gather his wheat into the storehouse, but the chaff he will burn up with fire that cannot be put out."—Matt. 3: 1, 2, 7-12; 2 Thess. 1:5.

[2] The coming one, Jesus, as soon as he heard that John had been arrested, began preaching the same message: "Repent, for the kingdom of the heavens has drawn near." (Matt. 4:12, 17) He there began weaving the pattern of judgment, working out a harmonious design governed by a set purpose, for that is what a pattern is. The first strand, the all-important time element, was marked by the preaching of the Kingdom message. As Jesus said when leading up to the illustration of the rich man and Lazarus: "The Law and the Prophets were until John. From then on the kingdom of God is being declared as good news."—Luke 16:16.

[3] Jesus then proceeded to take two more strands, saying first: "It is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one particle of a letter of the Law to go unfulfilled." He then added: "Everyone that divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery, and he that marries a woman divorced from a husband commits adultery." (Luke 16:17, 18) It is unlikely that his hearers saw any connection between those statements. In fact, not until after the Christian congregation had the inspired writings of the apostle Paul did the situation become clear. In the light of those writings we can today examine those two strands and appreciate their designed purpose.

[4] Jesus not only kept the Law by perfect obedience to its requirements, he also fulfilled it. As he once said: "I came, not to destroy, but to fulfill," also saying that down to the last "particle of a letter . . . all things [must] take place." (Matt. 5: 17, 18) Paul wrote that the Law was a "shadow [or, "typical representation"] of

1. What contrasts marked John the Baptist's ministry?
2. What is meant by a pattern, and how did Jesus commence such in his ministry?
3. As recorded at Luke 16:17, 18, what two strands did Jesus then take up?
4. In what way did Jesus fulfill the Law, leading to what realities and final outcome?

the things to come, but the reality belongs to the Christ." (Col. 2:17; Heb. 8:5; 10:1) In his life and sacrificial death, Jesus caused the big realities to take place. One of the main provisions of the Law was that of sacrifice for sins, especially those on the day of atonement. However, those animal sacrifices were "at no time able to take sins away completely. But this man [Jesus] offered one sacrifice for sins perpetually" by laying down his perfect human life in death. (Heb. 10:11, 12) His death laid the foundation for tremendous changes, with great benefits to those exercising faith therein, beginning with the Jewish members of the "Lazarus" class. Having fulfilled its provisions, then, says Paul, that former Law covenant was taken out of the way and nailed to the torture stake on which Jesus was impaled. (Col. 2:14) But what connection did that have with the next strand, with Jesus' remark about divorce and adultery?

[5] Having acceptably "offered himself without blemish to God," Jesus was made "a mediator of a new covenant." (Heb. 9:14, 15) Paul explains that prior thereto the Jews were bound under their Law covenant as "a married woman is bound by law to her husband while he is alive . . . But if her husband dies, she is free from his law, so that she is not an adulteress if she becomes another man's. So, my brothers, you also were made dead to the Law through the body of the Christ, that you might become another's, the one's who was raised up from the dead, that we should bear fruit to God." Paul was addressing his brothers of the "Lazarus" class, and it was only such who were "discharged from the Law."—Rom. 7:1-6.

[6] In contrast, Jesus' words on divorce and adultery were addressed primarily to the Pharisees, members of the "rich man" class. They were not free from the Law. True, the Law did embody a divorce provision whereby a man could have more than one living wife, but Jesus went back to God's original pattern for all who would have God's favor in, or under, the new covenant. There was no divorce provision for Adam and Eve. So for a Christian to divorce his or her mate, except on the ground of sexual unfaithfulness, and then remarry while the divorced partner is still alive, it means that such a one commits adultery. Hence Jesus' remarks to the Pharisees, who relied on tradition and the teaching of the then unwritten Talmud on this subject, would only irritate them. It was part of their torment.—Deut. 24:1-4; Matt. 19:3-9.

[7] Thus we see the pattern of judgment taking shape. Keep in mind, however, that the changes guaranteed by Jesus' death began to go into effect before his death actually occurred. The message and work of both John the Baptist and Jesus were based in strong faith on the certainty of Jesus' carrying out all that was foretold and foreshadowed in the Law and the Prophets. In proof of this, when Jesus instituted the memorial of his death the night *before* he was impaled, he passed the cup to his disciples, saying: "This cup means the new covenant by virtue of my blood, which is to be poured out in your behalf . . . and I make a covenant with you, just as my Father has made a covenant with me, for a kingdom."—Luke 22:20, 29.

[8] No, those changes did not have to wait. The declaration of the good news of the kingdom began to bring about a complete reversal of conditions to both the classes

5. With what illustration does Paul show that some were "discharged" from the Law?
6. What standard did Jesus set respecting divorce, and how would this affect the Pharisees?
7. How did Jesus anticipate the benefits of his death?
8. What resulted from Jesus' declaration of the Kingdom message?

we are considering. From then on both classes died to their former condition and experience, shown in Jesus' illustration by the death of Lazarus and the rich man. At Jesus' death in fulfillment of the Mosaic Law the "Lazarus" class died to that Law; and at the following Pentecost they were certified by the outpoured holy spirit as being in the Greater Abraham's bosom. What happened next, as described by Jesus, and what was signified thereby, we will follow with interest.

ABRAHAM, THE IMPORTANT FIGURE

9 Imagine the scene. In torment in Hades the rich man lifts his eyes, and what does he see? Why, afar off there is that one-time beggar now enjoying the bosom position with Abraham, that is, the favored place, as when one reclines in front of another on the same couch at a meal! (Luke 16:23; see also John 13:23.) Bringing Abraham into the picture was very significant, adding the most important strand to the whole pattern of judgment. Whom does he picture? Remember, Jesus was speaking directly to the Pharisees. They reckoned that they as the religious rulers were the only ones entitled to the bosom position of Abraham. In their eyes the common people did not come into the picture at all. Those rulers said to Jesus in an earlier encounter with him: "We are Abraham's offspring," and again: "Our father is Abraham," and yet again: "We have one Father, God."—John 8:33, 39, 41.

10 From this it is evident that the Pharisees considered that Abraham represented God. In this they were right. Where they were wrong was in claiming sonship with either Abraham or God. In God's eyes this relationship is determined, not by fleshly descent, but by one's disposition and works. As Jesus said to them on that same occasion: "If you are Abraham's children, do the works of Abraham," and Jesus also said: "You are from your father the Devil, and you wish to do the desires of your father. That one was a manslayer when he began."—John 8:39, 44.

11 While that explains why Jesus pictured that the once rich man was far removed from Abraham, we might wonder why Lazarus, after his death, was pictured as carried straight to the bosom position of Abraham. (Luke 16:22) The emphasis is on faith. Jesus came, not as King, as expected, but in the "likeness of sinful flesh," "brought just like a sheep to the slaughtering." (Rom. 8:3; Isa. 53:7) It required real faith to accept him as the Messiah. Some, not the haughty, but the humble, did exercise such faith. They stepped out in faith, just as Abraham did when he "went out [of his own country], although not knowing where he was going." (Heb. 11:8) They became disciples of Jesus and later, at Pentecost when they received the holy spirit, they became Christians. Of these, Paul wrote: "For all who are led by God's spirit, these are God's sons. . . . The spirit itself bears witness with our spirit that we are God's children."—Rom. 8:14-16.

12 Paul also said respecting these: "Those who adhere to faith are the ones who are sons of Abraham . . . [and] are being blessed together with faithful Abraham." How so? To Abraham the grand promise was made that through his seed "all nations of the earth will certainly bless themselves." That seed is primarily

9, 10. (a) What important character did Jesus introduce in his illustration? (b) How did the Pharisees view their relationship with Abraham? (c) In what way were they correct, and in what way incorrect, in their conclusions?

11. Why was faith essential in order to accept Jesus as the Messiah?

12. How were those who adhered to faith further blessed?

Christ Jesus. But in the riches of God's undeserved kindness others are privileged to share with Christ as part of that seed. As Paul again said: "You are all, in fact, sons of God through your faith in Christ Jesus. . . . Moreover, if you belong to Christ, you are really Abraham's seed, heirs with reference to a promise."—Gal. 3:7-9, 16, 26-29; Gen. 22:18.

13 In summary, then, we see that the members of the Christian congregation, led by God's spirit, are God's sons. They are also spoken of as sons of Abraham because of their faith like that of his and because, with Christ Jesus, they constitute Abraham's seed, God's instrument for fulfilling his purpose centered in his kingdom. They comprise the "Lazarus" class, commencing with those Jews who were conscious of their spiritual need and who exercised faith when they heard God's messengers, John the Baptist and Jesus. In fact, John and Jesus acted as angels, or messengers, in bringing those Jews into line for those grand blessings tied in with God's promise given under oath to Abraham and his seed. No wonder, then, that Jesus pictured Lazarus as at once "carried off by the angels to the bosom position of Abraham."—Luke 16:22.

14 Though the "Lazarus" class, to begin with, was limited to the faithful Jews, it did not stay that way. To a certain Gentile army officer who showed unusual faith, Jesus said: "I tell you that many from eastern parts and western parts will come and recline at the table with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of the heavens; whereas the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the darkness outside. There is where their weeping and the gnashing of their teeth will be." (Matt. 8:5-12) This indicated that many non-Jews, hitherto alienated from God and in a beggarly condition, would come from all parts and be brought right into the bosom of divine favor. As Paul said: "Now the Scripture, seeing in advance that God would declare people of the nations righteous due to faith, declared the good news beforehand to Abraham, namely: 'By means of you all the nations will be blessed.'" (Gal. 3:8) But as for those who thought that as the natural sons of Abraham they were the undisputed heirs to all the key positions in God's kingdom, they would find themselves rejected and in torment.

15 The inclusion of Isaac and Jacob together with Abraham in this instance makes a fine picture of the Kingdom, the Theocracy, in its complete setup. Abraham, the father of those who adhere to faith, pictures the heavenly Father, Jehovah, the real source of all the blessings to the nations. Isaac, Abraham's son, pictures God's Son, Jesus Christ. Thus when Abraham offered his son Isaac in sacrifice on Mount Moriah, or went to the point of doing so, he foreshadowed how Jehovah offered up his only-begotten Son in actual sacrifice. In turn, Isaac's son Jacob pictures the Christian congregation. As Jacob received life from Abraham through Isaac, so likewise the Christian congregation receives spiritual life from Jehovah through Jesus Christ. This congregation started off with a remnant of faithful Jews, but about three and a half years after Pentecost the Kingdom good news began to be preached to the Gentiles, starting with Cornelius. Since then the people of the nations have come in from all parts, making up the full number. All of such constitute the "Lazarus" class.

13. (a) Who comprised the "Lazarus" class in the first instance? (b) How did John and Jesus act as angels toward such?

14. What indication was given that many non-Jews would come into divine favor?

15. What fine picture of the Theocracy did Jesus give at Matthew 8:11?

GOD'S "JUDICIAL DECISION" A "GREAT CHASM"

[16] Turning our attention now to the latter part of Jesus' illustration, taken up with the argument between the rich man and Abraham, we find further expressions of God's judgment. Note the two pleas made by the rich man. First, he asks that Lazarus be sent to cool his tongue with a drop of water because of the fire. Failing that, he then asks that Lazarus be sent to warn his five brothers about this place of torment. (Luke 16:24-28) Anything to get Lazarus away from Abraham's bosom, and keep him away! Why did he not ask that the angels be sent on these errands of mercy, seeing how speedily they acted when carrying Lazarus off to Abraham? But, no, it must be Lazarus who must do the running about and act as messenger. From Jesus' portrayal of the rich man we can only imagine that, if Lazarus had actually visited him and put his finger in his mouth to cool his tongue with a drop of water, the rich man would have got a grip on his finger and kept him there! We know for a fact, as Jesus said, that the scribes and Pharisees strained every nerve to "make one proselyte," and, having once got him, they made him a 'subject for Gehenna twice as much so as themselves.' —Matt. 23:15.

[17] How ridiculous to think of this taking place literally, but how appropriate to the facts, since we know the classes Jesus had in mind! So we ask, How did the religious rulers seek to get relief, if by only a drop of water, from the "Lazarus" class? Those men would not have been so tormented if the despised followers of Jesus had just followed him and kept quiet. Instead, they were trained and sent forth, first the twelve and then the seventy. They, and not the rulers, were now acting as Abraham's seed, conveying heaven-sent blessings, curing the sick and preaching the kingdom of God. (Luke 9:1, 2; 10: 1, 9) Come Pentecost, and about 120 were empowered by the holy spirit to speak with tongues, and before the day closed a further 3,000 were added to their number. And their boldness! Both publicly and before the Sanhedrin, the apostle Peter and others, such as Stephen, never hesitated to declare the responsibility and bloodguilt of those rulers. (Acts 2:23; 3: 14, 17; 4:10; 5:30; 7:52) As Abraham's natural descendants, the "rich man" class figuratively called out: "Father Abraham, have mercy on me" and make this "Lazarus" class speak instead in our favor, if only a word! How did Abraham reply?

[18] Abraham's first words merely stated the facts: "Child, remember that you received in full your good things in your lifetime, but Lazarus correspondingly the injurious things. Now, however, he is having comfort here but you are in anguish." (Luke 16:25) No words were wasted on the rich man. Why not? Because Jesus knew that he was acting as God's servant in a time of inspection. He was in truth Abraham's seed and any who called down evil on such seed were cursed by God. (Gen. 12:3) As a class, the "rich man" had had his day, his "lifetime," when he had 'received in full the good things' that he could so easily have dispensed to those in need. But that class showed that they never had any intention of doing so, and now God's adverse judgment was manifest upon them. God's favorable judgment was equally manifest on the "Lazarus" class. This was the pattern of judgment, like a

16. How did the requests made by the rich man show his real intention regarding Lazarus, and revealing what disposition?

17. How and why did the religious rulers seek to get relief from the "Lazarus" class?

18. How did Abraham's reply fittingly portray both sides of the pattern of judgment?

design in drawing where one side balances and offsets the other. A strong straight line is drawn right down the middle for emphasis, and this is where the "great chasm" comes in. Note Abraham's next words to the rich man.

19 "And besides all these things, a great chasm has been fixed between us and you people, so that those wanting to go over from here to you people cannot, neither may people cross over from there to us." (Luke 16:26) No fraternizing! The "Lazarus" class could not compromise and speak peace to the "rich man" class. Jesus appreciated that this was a vital strand in the pattern of judgment, and that God's "judicial decision is a vast watery deep." (Ps. 36:6) Mark you, it was only as *classes* that the judgment was final. Neither class, nor any supporting classes, could cross over to the other, but individuals could and did during their lifetime. The apostle Paul was a notable example who, when "formerly in Judaism," bitterly persecuted the "Lazarus" class. (Gal. 1:13-17) John the Baptist called the Pharisees and Sadducees "offspring of vipers," and then said: "Produce fruit that befits repentance." Some of them later did so.—Matt. 3:7, 8; Acts 6:7.

20 Knowing the mental attitude of the "rich man" class, Jesus added to his illustration a further argument prompted by the rich man. Trying to ignore or get around that chasm, he pleaded: "In that event I ask you, father, to send him [Lazarus] to the house of my father, for I have five brothers, in order that he may give them a thorough witness, that they also should not get into this place of torment." (Luke 16:27, 28) Observe that, while addressing Abraham as father, he speaks of a more closely related father, in whose house there are five brothers of his. Jesus knew of the religious house of Judaism, built on human tradition, to which the religious rulers belonged. It was that house that prompted the spirit of bitter persecution, even of murder. Its father was the Devil, who "was a manslayer." (John 8:44) The five brothers (with the rich man making six, a symbol of the Devil's organization) represented all the admirers and supporters of the religious rulers, and manifesting the same spirit. The rulers sought relief from being exposed, not only in their own eyes, but also in the eyes of their supporters. If these, their brothers, were figuratively to die and land in the same place, that would but add to their torment. So, in effect, those rulers wanted the "Lazarus" class to quit the position of divine favor and give a "thorough witness," not of the judgment message, but one that would give the appearance of things being restored to what they were prior to the inspection period, when neither the rulers nor their supporters were exposed to torment.

21 Could that be done? What was Abraham's response? "But Abraham said, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to these.'" (Luke 16:29) Nothing else and nothing less than God's word of truth! It was on that authority alone that Jesus spoke to the people and their rulers, including the judgment message then due. The "Lazarus" class spoke likewise. For example, Peter's strong, stirring message on the day of Pentecost was based entirely on quotations from the Hebrew Scriptures, from Moses (the Law) and the Prophets and the Psalms. The fact that three thousand immediately responded and were baptized proved that the He-

19. What was the effect and significance of the "great chasm"?

20. How did the rich man make a further appeal, and how did this have an application in Jesus' day?

21. What was the import of Abraham's response?

brew Scriptures in themselves were a sufficient warning and guide to those willing to listen, many of whom were formerly adherents of Judaism.—Acts 2:41.

[22] But the rich man had not finished. Showing now his true colors and bluntly disagreeing with Abraham, he said: "No, indeed, father Abraham, but if someone from the dead goes to them they will repent." (Luke 16:30) In other words, he called for a climactic sign, for someone to rise from the dead, as being the one thing necessary. This would avoid the need either to preach from the Scriptures or to expose the traditions of Judaism. More than once the Pharisees and others asked Jesus to "display to them a sign from heaven." He answered: "A wicked and adulterous generation keeps on seeking for a sign, but no sign will be given it except the sign of Jonah." Jonah was a sufficient sign to the Ninevites who, Jesus said, "repented at what Jonah preached, but, look! something more than Jonah is here." (Matt. 16:1-4; 12:38-41) Jesus preached with far more authority and supporting evidence than Jonah ever did. But the result was as Jesus said: "Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will by no means believe."—John 4:48.

[23] In agreement with this, Abraham replied to the rich man: "If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded if someone rises from the dead." (Luke 16:31) This was the final word of judgment against the class represented by the rich man and his brothers. If they turn a deaf ear to God's message in the Scriptures, they will turn a blind eye to God's messenger, whether it be Jesus or the "Lazarus" class. As Jesus told them: "You are searching the Scriptures . . . that bear witness about me," and he added that, "if you believed Moses you would believe me, for that one wrote about me. But if you do not believe the writings of that one, how will you believe my sayings?"—John 5:39, 46, 47.

SPECIAL NEXT ISSUE

Read: *Mankind's Millennium Under God's Kingdom —Why Literally So*

[24] Jesus' illustration ended on a note of strong judgment, as clear cut as that "great chasm." It showed God's righteous "judicial decision" both for and against. It was against the whole household of those who only "heard with annoyance," and who "shut their eyes; that they might never see . . . and get the sense of it with their hearts and turn back." (Matt. 13:15) But, thank God, that final word was wholly in favor of the "Lazarus" class. There would never be any need or justification for their leaving or forsaking the place of divine favor with all its comforting provisions and opportunity for feasting at Jehovah's banquet table.

[25] Can we draw parallel lines and extend the pattern of judgment in all its salient features to our own day? Does Jesus' illustration have a pointed message for us? Can we trace two classes in contrast and see how a great change, a reversal of conditions, has taken place under our very eyes? And are we, as individuals, thereby helped to see what we must do to find true riches under God's favorable judgment?

22. (a) What was the rich man's final plea? (b) What prompted this, and how did Jesus respond to the demand for a sign?

23. How was Abraham's final word appropriate and true to the facts?

24. What warning and encouragement can be gained from the final word spoken in this illustration?

25. What questions does this prompt respecting our own day?

MAKES MANIFEST *the* TRULY RICH

IN HIS prophecy concerning the time of the end, Jesus said: "This good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations." This compares with the message at the first advent, namely, that the "kingdom of the heavens has drawn near." Today's message is more forceful. It tells of God's kingdom actually established, for in the autumn of 1914 C.E. Jehovah installed his King, Christ Jesus, not on an earthly throne, but at the heavenly Mount Zion.—Matt. 24:14; 4:17; Ps. 2:6; Heb. 12:22.

[2] The Kingdom message at the first advent marked the beginning of an inspection and judgment period. It was the first strand in the pattern of judgment. As a result, changes began to take place involving two classes, as portrayed in Jesus' illustration of the rich man and Lazarus. The same is true today. The principles on which the inspection and judgment are based remain the same, but it is worked out on a larger scale. By examining the context of the illustration and other related scriptures we were able to identify the two main characters at the time of the first advent in its first fulfillment. The same procedure will help us to get a clear picture of the present situation. It will also aid us individually to see where we stand in relation to that judgment pattern and its designed purpose.

[3] We do not have to look far to find the modern "rich man" class. The religious clergy and leaders of Christendom bear a marked resemblance to the Jewish religious leaders of Jesus' day. Today, as then, these men are in a class to themselves, sacrosanct, reckoned as superior in standing and education, marked by their dress and their many titles. They are rich in positions of influence and prominence, often in good standing with the political rulers, and in some cases exercising a real power behind the throne, or the dictator. These men are also rich religiously in their claims to be exclusively God's spokesmen in national affairs, also in social and personal problems. In their congregations they are usually the only ones ordained to preach and conduct the services. In some churches these men claim the right to hear confession and grant absolution. Certain ones even claim the right to canonize one as a saint, declaring such a one to be holy and righteous. In very truth the modern "rich man" class seeks to deck himself with purple and linen, enjoying himself from day to day with magnificence.—Luke 16:19.

[4] We also do not have to look far to locate the "beggar" class of Jesus' illustration. Remember how at the first advent this class of lowly and humble ones showed up as soon as the forerunner, John the Baptist, began preaching. So, too, today,

1. Why is the Kingdom message today so forceful?
2. What procedure will help us in applying the illustration at Luke 16:19-31 to our own day?
3. How can we identify the modern "rich man" class?
4. Since when has a modern "Lazarus" class become apparent, and how so?

before the Kingdom's establishment in 1914, there was a similar preparatory work done of clearing the way before Jehovah's representative. (Mal. 3:1) Being on a larger scale, it covered a longer period of about forty years. At once it found those who were aware of their spiritual need, but who, like John's disciples, became no longer dependent on the orthodox religious leaders for spiritual food. Up till then they, like Lazarus in his ulcerous condition, had been "put at his [the rich man's] gate" to catch what morsels of food might be dropped. (Luke 16:20, 21) However, Christendom's clergy, like their former counterpart, have shown scant concern for the common people. They have preferred their traditions and creeds to teachings governed strictly by the Bible. Their table might have the appearance of a magnificent spread, but their food is adulterated.

CORRECT VIEW OF THE TIME FACTOR

[5] Then, as told in the illustration, something happened that changed the entire scene. Both men died. That is where the important time element comes in, marked in the fulfillment by the declaration of the Kingdom good news. Yes, death is a climactic event, but do not get the wrong impression. The resultant changes do not occur all at once, affecting everyone simultaneously. It did not happen that way at the first advent. In anticipation of Jesus' ministry, a work was done and a message declared for six months prior thereto that brought comfort to some and torment to others. Likewise prior to 1914, the message of truth centering around God's kingdom brought comfort and hope to some, filling the souls of the hungry, but it angered and tormented the clergy, who were not slow to show it. (For details see *Jehovah's Witnesses in the Divine Purpose.*) That early work and message were in anticipation of a larger and more clearly defined pattern to be worked out after 1914. Like the morning sun, we do not have to wait for it actually to rise for its penetrating beams to reveal everything in sharp outline. Before that, in anticipation, the welcome light of dawn gives an increasingly clear picture of the landscape before us.

[6] There is another thing. When Jesus gave his illustration, the religious rulers still reckoned to hold on to their high living and pretentious claims. There were also many in a beggarly state who only later experienced the comfort of divine favor. That did not alter the fact that the inspection period had commenced and nothing could change its principles or stop or even hinder its outworking. Jesus spoke accordingly. So today, once Christ Jesus was enthroned on heavenly Mount Zion at the expiration of the Gentile Times in 1914, nothing could stop or delay the proceedings due to take place.

[7] In Paul's inspired description of the Theocratic setup at "Mount Zion . . . heavenly Jerusalem," after mentioning the "myriads of angels . . . and the [Christian] congregation of the first-born," he then names the most important figure, the Greater Abraham, "God the Judge of all." (Heb. 12:22, 23) Yes, he judges the "Lazarus" class and the "rich man" class and all others. His "judicial decision is a vast watery deep," a "great chasm," righteous and inexorable respecting all classes. (Ps. 36:6; Luke 16:26) However, until the final execution of his judgment it is possible for individuals to experience a change of heart and forsake one class and flee to another, even during this inspection period. Do not forget, though, the time is limited. It is in this vein that Paul

5. Are we to expect a sudden fulfillment of what was pictured by the death of the rich man and Lazarus?

6. How are we further guided in this respect?

7. How did Paul identify the Greater Abraham, leading to what fine appeal?

continues, saying: "See that you do not beg off from him who is speaking." He goes on to say that the entire present system of things, yes, the symbolic heaven and earth, will be shaken and completely removed. He concludes with this fine appeal: "Wherefore, seeing that we are to receive a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us continue to have undeserved kindness, through which we may acceptably render God sacred service with godly fear and awe."—Heb. 12:25-28.

[8] Paul adds a strong, final word: "For our God is also a consuming fire." Note the distinction. In his illustration, Jesus told of the fiery condition that men suffer while still on earth, that torments but does not kill. Paul, however, was referring to the final execution of judgment that consumes and destroys all life in the "lake of fire . . . the second death."—Heb. 12:29; Rev. 20:14.

[9] Looking at the facts, we find further evidence of the need to consider properly the time factor. Though 1914 marked the birth of the Kingdom, it was not until 1919 that the "Lazarus" class fully experienced their changed condition. (Rev. 12:5) What happened? During World War I the clergy of Christendom were permitted by God to oppress and drive Jehovah's dedicated servants of the "Lazarus" class into a tight corner of inactivity. As a class, it seemed they were finished and, symbolically, their lifeless corpses were exposed "on the broad way of the great city," Babylon the Great. Their enemies 'rejoiced over them.' Then, under God's directive decree, a sudden reversal occurred. The "spirit of life from God" restored them to activity, and "they heard a loud voice out of heaven say to them: 'Come on up here' . . . and their enemies beheld them." That is exactly what happened in 1919 to Jehovah's witnesses who were restored to his favor and exalted service in the interest of his kingdom in the eyes of all, including their enemies of the "rich man" class.—Rev. 11:7-12.

[10] Since then the changed conditions as foretold have become more and more apparent. Jehovah's true servants, who had previously wept and were hungry, could now "cry out joyfully because of the good condition of the heart," due to being fed with Kingdom truths and enriched with Kingdom service. In contrast, it is woe to those professed servants of God who 'declare themselves righteous before men,' and like 'all men to speak well of them.' These now have cause to "make outcries because of the pain of heart" as they see the "Lazarus" class enjoying great prosperity and being made truly rich, "blessed . . . with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in union with Christ," the reigning King, and with Jehovah, the Greater Abraham. But the modern "rich man" class are as good as dead and buried as far as having any evidence of divine favor. They reject the Kingdom message proclaimed by the "Lazarus" class. Instead, they advocate such human political substitutes as the League of Nations and the United Nations. Notice now the present-day pleas of the "rich man" class, as indicated in Jesus' illustration.—Isa. 65:14; Luke 6:26; 16:15; Eph. 1:3.

THE PLEAS OF THE MODERN "RICH MAN" CLASS

[11] In broad outline, the arguments of the modern religious leaders are similar to those of the scribes and Pharisees. In both cases actions speak louder than words. Every effort is made to minimize or offset

8. What final word did Paul add, and what distinction is to be noted?
9. How does the prophecy at Revelation 11:7-12 throw further light on the time factor?
10. Since 1919, how have the changed conditions for both classes become more evident?
11. How do we see the rich man's plea at Luke 16:24 fulfilled in our time?

the vigorous work and message of the "Lazarus" class, even endeavoring to get the work banned where possible. 'O for Lazarus to be sent to cool my tongue with a drop of water in this blazing fire!' O for a soothing, complimentary word from Jehovah's witnesses and, incidentally, get them to quit their position of divine favor! Anything to get them away from Abraham's bosom!—Luke 16:24.

12 In reply to the rich man's plea you will recall that Abraham merely reviewed the facts, implying that nothing could alter them. That is how it is today. The result of the efforts to get Jehovah's witnesses to tone down their message or change their stand are just as fruitless as with the early Christian congregation. Jehovah gives the same instruction to the "Lazarus" class today as he did to his servant Jeremiah: "To all those to whom I shall send you, you should go; and everything that I shall command you, you should speak. . . . They will be certain to fight against you, but they will not prevail against you, for 'I am with you,' is the utterance of Jehovah, 'to deliver you.' "—Jer. 1:7, 19.

13 You will further recall in the illustration that Abraham next drew attention to the "great chasm." But did you notice that he did not confine his remark to just the rich man and Lazarus, saying that neither of them could cross over to the other because of the chasm? He speaks of many people on both sides, saying: "A great chasm has been fixed between us and *you people,* so that *those* wanting to go over from here to you people cannot, neither may people cross over from there to us." —Luke 16:26.

14 By this means Jesus opened the door to a wider application of his illustration. This is particularly true in the modern fulfillment. We know that the rich man had five brothers who, by implication, were headed for the same place of torment. The only creatures Jesus mentioned as being on the side of Lazarus were those who took the trouble to put him, as a needy beggar, at the rich man's gate, also the dogs who considerately licked his ulcers. There we have the clue. They did something for Lazarus in his need. The rich man did nothing. In another illustration, Jesus tells of those who do good to his spiritual brothers (the "Lazarus" class), even to the least of them, when seen to be in need. These who are glad to render service to Christ's brothers may be nobodies, or just dogs, in the eyes of the "rich man" class, but Jesus says that in his eyes they are sheep (that is, his "other sheep," in addition to his "little flock" of joint heirs). (John 10:16; Luke 12:32) On the other hand, those who refuse or fail to render any aid, Jesus likens to goats who suffer the final judgment, the consuming "everlasting fire prepared for the Devil and his angels." As for the sheeplike ones, they are invited to "inherit the kingdom prepared for you." Even now, as seen in the vision given to John, they serve God "day and night in his temple," in close association with the "temple" class or "Lazarus" class, hence enjoying an earthly position of divine favor. These associates are also made truly rich, "because the Lamb . . . will guide them to fountains of waters of life."—Matt. 25:31-46; Rev. 7:15-17.

FURTHER PLEA REJECTED

15 To endure tormenting shame and disgrace is bad enough. It is far worse if those well known to you, your own house-

12. As indicated by Abraham's reply, what has been the result of the plea of the "rich man" class?
13. How did Jesus point to a wider application when mentioning the great chasm?
14. What further classes are seen in the modern fulfillment besides those pictured by the rich man and Lazarus?
15. How is the situation now seen regarding the plea for Lazarus to visit the house of the rich man's father?

hold, are involved and all alike share in the public exposure. As with the Jewish clergy of Jesus' day, so now Christendom's clergy and leaders find themselves in a similar position. They would like to maneuver the "Lazarus" class away from their position of rendering exclusive devotion to the Greater Abraham. Could they not be sent on a mission and, in the words of the illustration, call at the house of the rich man's five brothers and stay long enough to give them a "thorough witness"? (Luke 16:27, 28) In other words, make a friendly contact with the supporters of Christendom and witness to them, yes, but the kind of witness that would spare them torment. If that should happen, we may be sure that they would be made welcome and would be retained and made a part of the household of the rich man's father, Christendom's father, the "god of this system of things," Satan the Devil!

[16] Could that be done? You remember Abraham's answer: "They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to these." (Luke 16:29) Today these Hebrew Scriptures have been supplemented by the Christian Greek Scriptures. The "Lazarus" class and their associates, that is, all of Jehovah's witnesses, now use the entire Bible, telling, among other things, of the reason for God's judgment on Babylon the Great, her bloodguilt, her friendship with the world, her false doctrines, her shameless luxury, her coming destruction.—Rev. 17:5, 6; 18:2, 3, 21.

[17] This extended "thorough witness" is not the kind that pleases either Christendom's leaders or her supporters. When the rich man responded: "No, indeed, father Abraham," he was really saying "No" to Moses and the Prophets. How true that is today! Jehovah's witnesses in themselves are not disliked or feared by the religious leaders. It is their message from the Bible that, like a sword, is "powerful by God for overturning strongly entrenched things." (2 Cor. 10:4; Eph. 6:17) Anything but that! So what is the alternative? A sign! A sign so overwhelming that there will be no call for either reason or faith. "If someone from the dead goes to them they will repent," pleaded the rich man. (Luke 16:30) The "rich man" class acknowledge the need for repentance on the part of their supporters, but they want it done by a shortcut method. They want a method that will obviate the need to continually "pour out the seven bowls of the anger of God into the earth," or to continually refer to Moses and the Prophets and the rest of the Scriptures, saying: "It is written."—Rev. 16:1; Matt. 4:4, 7, 10.

[18] There is no changing or evading the pattern of judgment. "If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded if someone rises from the dead." (Luke 16:31) That was Abraham's last word. It turned out like that for the Jewish clergy and their supporters. It turns out the same way today. As in the early days, so now, neither the religious leaders nor their supporters can ever say they did not have the opportunity to listen to the Scriptures and their message. They are not *forced* to listen or be persuaded. They can harden their hearts and shut their eyes. They can oppose and persecute, but they cannot silence the witnesses who enjoy the protection of the Greater Abraham. In the apostles' days "persecution arose against the congregation that was in Jerusalem . . . [but] those who had been scattered went through the

16. In what way does Abraham's reply now have an enlarged fulfillment?

17. (a) How is the "rich man" class affected by the "thorough witness"? (b) What sign do they demand, and why?

18. In what way is Abraham's final word seen to be appropriate in today's situation?

land declaring the good news of the word." (Acts 8:1, 4) Today the Witnesses may be driven underground, but they still preach.

19 The responsibility of the religionists is, in fact, greatly increased because "someone from the dead" has been raised up. As Peter said: "God raised this One [Christ Jesus] up on the third day . . . Also, he ordered us to preach to the people and to give a thorough witness that this is the One decreed by God to be judge of the living and the dead." (Acts 10:40, 42) Yes, a thorough witness was then given, but even more so today since the risen One has become King and Judge in God's kingdom. Additionally, the "Lazarus" class themselves were figuratively raised from the dead in 1919, as already noted, like Jonah's deliverance from the belly of the great fish. But all this makes no difference to the household of the rich man and his brothers.

LEARNING HOW TO BE TRULY RICH

20 The Bible writer James very aptly summed up the theme of our discussion. Under inspiration he wrote: "Come, now, you rich men, weep, howling over your miseries [torment] that are coming upon you. Your riches have rotted, and your outer garments [of linen and purple] have become moth-eaten. . . . Something like fire is what you have stored up [not in future eternal torment after death, but] in the last days." Then, referring directly to the pattern of judgment, he continued: "Look! The judge is standing before the doors. Brothers, take as a pattern of the suffering of evil and the exercising of patience the prophets, who spoke in the name of Jehovah. . . . You have heard of the endurance of Job and have seen the outcome Jehovah gave, that Jehovah is very tender in affection and merciful." —Jas. 5:1-3, 9-11.

21 This latter part gives the bright side of the pattern. For quite a time Job, like Lazarus, was deprived of everything and obliged to scrape the pus from his boils, like the dogs who licked Lazarus' ulcers. (Job 2:8) Job, too, was at the mercy of his supposed benefactors, his three religious friends, from whom he got about as much relief and help as Lazarus did from the scraps from the rich man's table. Then came an inspection and judgment from Jehovah that put everyone in his right place. It made manifest who was truly rich. Restored to health and openly shown as having God's favor, Job was blessed with twice as much as he had before. Additionally, he had a new family of ten fine children, like the "great crowd" of "other sheep" who are gathered to the "Lazarus" class to become "one flock, [under] one shepherd."—Job 42:10-17; Rev. 7:9; John 10:16.

22 As individuals, we can learn how to become truly rich, even if it means changing our own pattern of life. We can "search for Jehovah . . . while he may be found." We can avoid the errors of the 'wicked and harmful man.' The rich man in Jesus' illustration never learned anything. He was haughty and self-centered to the end, persisting in viewing Lazarus as just a beggar to be called on to do his bidding. But Abraham countered his pleas by advocating just one thing, "Moses and the Prophets," the Holy Scriptures. God's pattern is made very clear therein, showing you how to "return to Jehovah, who will have mercy . . . for he will forgive in a large way."—Isa. 55:6, 7.

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19. What greater responsibility now rests on all the religionists?
20. In James' reference to rich men, what close correspondencies are to be noted as compared with Jesus' illustration?
21. How does the drama of Job compare with that of Lazarus?
22. In order to become truly rich, what must we do and what must we avoid?

23 Jesus, too, in his message to the "congregation in Laodicea," showed how you can learn by contrast to appreciate true riches. Though addressed primarily to the "Lazarus" class, the same principles apply to all of God's people. That congregation had become lukewarm due to its failure to distinguish between true and false riches, and boasted: "I am rich and have acquired riches and do not need anything at all." They were self-sufficient and self-righteous. But judged by true spiritual values, as Jesus said, they were 'miserable, pitiable, poor, blind and naked,' in danger of being rejected, vomited out of his mouth. Note Jesus' remedy: "I advise you to buy from me gold refined by fire that you may become [truly] rich, and white outer garments that you may become dressed and that the shame of your nakedness may not become manifested, and eyesalve to rub in your eyes that you may see."—Rev. 3:14-18.

24 Ah, yes! *"Buy from me,"* said Jesus, and pay my price. It is not unreasonable. He invites you to give yourself in devotion and dedication to Jehovah, as he himself set the pattern. Submitting yourself to his training and discipline will produce the 'tested quality of faith, of much greater value than gold proved by fire.' "Seek righteousness," not parading in your own "purple and linen," but in garments 'washed white in the blood of the Lamb,' trusting in the merit of his sacrifice. "Seek meekness," by being teachable, continually rubbing in the eyesalve, making a real effort to keep your eyes opened to the truths stored up in God's Word.—1 Pet. 1:7; Rev. 7:14; Zeph. 2:3.

25 To anyone taking this course, Jesus made a most inviting promise: "Look! I am standing at the door and knocking. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come into his house and take the evening meal with him and he with me." (Rev. 3:20) If willing, you can respond to that personal appeal and become truly rich, enjoying the close position of his favor and acceptance as part of the 'one flock under the one shepherd.'

26 If you come to realize that you have been trapped in Babylon the Great, then respond to that appeal quickly and become one of *Jehovah's* people by dedicating yourself to him. The Babylonians are not told to flee, but Jehovah says: "Get out of her, *my people.*" (Rev. 18:4) It is a matter of faith, a living faith backed up by a course of action in harmony with God's Word of truth. There is no excuse for ignorance. The chasmlike line of demarcation is clearly drawn. Jesus said: "This is the basis for judgment, that the light has come into the world." Jesus himself, in his life and teaching, personified and exemplified that "true light that gives light." Generally, men have refused to come to the light, preferring to practice the vile things that belong to the darkness. They refuse to exercise faith and, said Jesus: "He that does not exercise faith has been judged already." They prefer to stay in a condemned state in Babylon the Great. It is their own choice.—John 1: 9; 3:18-20.

27 In contrast, why not come to the light and learn how to be obedient to it, so that your "works may be made manifest as having been worked in harmony with God"? (John 3:21) Thus, instead of having to taste the bitter contrast between life and destruction when that great city is destroyed, or at Armageddon, you can

23. How does Jesus' message to the Laodiceans help us in this regard?
24. Jesus' words: "Buy from me," call for what requirements?
25. What fine encouragement did Jesus then give?
26. What action is now urgently required, based on what quality?
27. By taking what course and gaining what position can we enjoy refreshing contrasts both now and in the future?

come now into the loving favor and protection of Abraham's God, Jehovah. From that vantage position you can start experiencing now the happy contrasts that make life so endlessly interesting and worth while, with the wonderful prospect of everlasting life in God's new system of things with its further promise of delightful contrasts, for its Creator says: "Look! I am making all things new."—Rev. 21:5.

A HARLOT EXECUTED BY HER LOVERS

IT IS not uncommon to read in the newspapers an account about a clandestine affair in which there is a falling out between lovers and the woman is murdered by her paramour. Usually it is a love triangle and jealousy is the motive. Sometimes we read of where a harlot is murdered by her lovers, even stripped naked, tortured and thrown alongside the road. Often this is because of their disgust at her complete filthiness and degradation or because she was disloyal in some scheme of theirs.

The harlot we are discussing here, however, is no ordinary harlot. She is one that has had kings and rulers as her paramours. Nevertheless, she is executed by them, and not for reasons of jealousy, but because she has deceived them. She has made the world situation much more difficult for the rulers to handle. Actually she leads them into a postion where they are found to be fighting against God. They come to the point of disgust and hatred toward her that causes them to want to obliterate her and all thoughts and memories of her.

This harlot, whose activities have affected the lives of everyone on earth, is the one that was portrayed in vision to the apostle John. She is an international harlot and her activities and her final destiny and execution at the hand of her lovers are clearly described in the record John made of the vision. We read in the book of Revelation that John saw a woman, a harlot named Babylon the Great, riding a scarlet-colored beast. He writes: "And he says to me: 'The waters that you saw, where the harlot is sitting, mean peoples and crowds and nations and tongues. And the ten horns that you saw, and the wild beast, these will hate the harlot and will make her devastated and naked, and will eat up her fleshy parts and will completely burn her with fire. For God put it into their hearts to carry out his thought, even to carry out their one thought by giving their kingdom to the wild beast, until the words of God will have been accomplished. And the woman whom you saw means the great city that has a kingdom over the kings of the earth.' "—Rev. 17:15-18.

A RELIGIOUS EMPIRE OVER THE NATIONS

As explained in previous issues of *The Watchtower,* the scarlet-colored beast is the international peace organization now known as the United Nations. The ten

horns represent the complete number of the earthly rulers that make up this organization. They are the powers that hold political control over their respective nations and peoples. The harlot is said to be sitting on many waters (Rev. 17:1), which mean peoples and crowds and nations and tongues. (Vs. 15) These have included people of all nations of the earth. Therefore, Babylon the Great is larger than a kingdom—she is an empire, a religious empire wielding religious influence and control over lives of peoples, just as she is shown sitting upon them. She has wielded so much power and influence in this way that the kings and rulers of the earth have found it advantageous to adopt a form of religion, in some places even making a Babylonish religion the state religion. It is in this way that Babylon the Great has a "kingdom over the kings of the earth." Babylon the Great, being made up of the world empire of multitudinous sects, is therefore greater than Christendom, and older, but includes Christendom.

What is the "one thought" that the "ten kings" have, and how does God put it into their hearts to carry it out? Well, God knows how to reserve the ungodly to the day of judgment to be punished. (2 Pet. 2:9) In letting them go to great limits in their schemes he has a purpose. He, too, has a "thought" of his own regarding the "ten kings" that involves the fate of Babylon the Great the harlot. He maneuvers them all into the position in which he wants them and causes them to be exposed and to show their true colors before they are destroyed.

GOD BRINGS THE HARLOT AND HER LOVERS TO JUDGMENT

The "one thought" the ten kings have is opposition to God's kingdom in the hands of his Lamb, Jesus Christ. Just as

Jehovah did with Pharaoh of ancient Egypt, who he told Moses beforehand would not listen to his voice until He had struck Egypt with all his wonderful acts (which finally ended in Pharaoh's destruction at Jehovah's hands in the Red Sea), so Jehovah knows these kings' heart attitude. He puts them on judgment before him and makes them produce the evidence. On the basis of this evidence he can righteously sentence them to destruction and execute the sentence.—Ex. 7:3-5.

The critical year for the "ten kings" was 1914 C.E., because the Gentile Times ran out in the fall of that year. The "ten kings" as well as Babylon the Great herself were warned of this through some of the clergymen of Christendom as well as by Jehovah's witnesses, but all of them ignored the warning. But what would the "ten kings" do when their power ran out? Jehovah foreknew their "one thought" and their course of action. In 1914 war over world domination broke out in Christendom. The leaders of the world were unwilling to turn over their sovereignty to Jehovah God's king, but, instead, wanted to continue their rule and entered into this war. It was accompanied by food short-

ages, pestilences and earthquakes in one place after another and by the development of more devastating weapons of warfare.—Matt. 24:7, 8.

A DECISION FOR WORLD RULERS

Here began an exposé of the harlot, the world empire of false religion, to her lovers, the politicians of the world, for while she claimed to be an organization of peace and unity, especially the part of her known as Christendom, she was absolutely helpless in preventing a most devastating world war, which the rulers themselves were reluctant to enter. In fact, rather than preventing the war, she took sides in it by means of her harlot daughters, her member religious organizations, even with prayers and imposing religious rites, which actually promoted it. God let the ten kings see how destruction stared them in the face if they persisted in such warfare.

Now a real decision faced the rulers. They were on trial for judgment by God. Just as Pharaoh of old was forced into a decision, God at this point forced the rulers to decide. He foreknew their hearts and knew that they would not give up their sovereignty and bow to his king. He knew that they would turn to creating a man-made organization for ensuring and preserving world peace and security so that their selfish interest would be preserved and they would be able to maintain their various human sovereignties over the distinct nations. As God's Word foretold, they put their confidence in man to form an association of nations in order to prevent the destruction they saw on the horizon and to preserve rule of mankind by man and not by God. Babylon egged them on in this "one thought."

The result of this "one thought" was the bringing forth of the political image of the wild beast that had ascended out of the sea. The product was the symbolic scarlet-colored wild beast. The "ten kings" went ahead with their thought by giving their kingdom to the scarlet-colored wild beast, which now stands in the form of the United Nations. They will continue to support this arrangement "until the words of God have been accomplished."

Just as Jehovah said to Pharaoh: "For this cause I have kept you in existence, for the sake of showing you my power and in order to have my name declared in all the earth," so he has let these nations carry out the one purpose and thought of theirs. (Ex. 9:16) But they are at the same time carrying out God's "thought," just as Pharaoh did. God's "thought" was for these enemies of his kingdom to combine themselves in one worldwide political organization and, by it, to present to him and his Messianic kingdom a united front, that he might face them all at one time and destroy them all together at one stroke.—Josh. 11:19, 20.

There is a great deal of mercy on Jehovah God's part here. In his "thought" he spares humankind, and especially his own people, much suffering. For he lets all the nations come to the point of trying to destroy God's people on earth at one time and themselves suffer destruction rather than let it be carried out over a long period of time, from one nation to another, in which there would be much more prolonged misery. How it magnifies Jehovah's justice to destroy them when they are brought to the point of exposing themselves as all being united on the one thing, opposition to God's kingdom, which is at the same time opposition to the best interests of the people!

LOVE TURNS TO HATE

Jehovah lets Babylon the Great continue in her degraded course and come to new low depths in her willingness to sacrifice

the welfare of the people for political gain. He allows her to continue to make earth's inhabitants drunk still more from her golden cup and the wine of her fornication. Then, in his due time and by the force of circumstances that he will produce, Jehovah will bring about the situation where her present lovers will turn on her with disgust and violent design. They will see that she is of no more use to them, in fact, has misled them into a situation which is very undesirable for them. This does not necessarily mean that all the nations will go communistic on either the Soviet Russian line or the Red Chinese line; certainly at the present time the majority of the symbolic "ten kings" in the United Nations are unwilling to turn against the world empire of Babylonian religion. The representatives and officials serving in the U.N. are from various religions of the earth, Mohammedan, Buddhist and others besides those of Christendom. Their attitude toward this matter is indicated by the recent peace-bell-ringing ceremony that was carried out at the United Nations headquarters on October 4, 1966. This ceremony was promoted by the chief delegates from Nigeria and Japan, an observer for the Holy See and the *chef de cabinet* to Secretary-General Thant of the U.N.*

Of course, these "ten kings," when they turn on the harlot, are drawing near to the time for their own destruction, but before Jehovah God destroys them in the place Biblically called Har–Magedon, he will cause their passionate love of the "great harlot" to turn to hatred. He has done such a thing before, and in ancient times he warned religious Jerusalem that he would bring her former passionate lovers against her to mutilate and destroy her. He had already caused a like experience to befall Samaria, her sister capital. Read the prophecies on this in Ezekiel 16: 33-42 and 23:1-31. Great Babylon is no better than unfaithful apostate Jerusalem. She deserves to be destroyed like a harlot, and Jehovah God will see to it that, ironically, her former lovers will take a hand in the violent destruction of her.

* The New York *Times*, October 5, 1966, Late City Edition, page 5.

ALL SEE FALSE RELIGION'S SHAME

The order of events of Babylon the Great's destruction is described for us in Revelation. First, the great river Euphrates will have been completely dried up, in fulfillment of the sixth plague. The waters of the Euphrates here represent the peoples supporting her. (Rev. 16:12) In this manner God will take away the protection and support that she used to get from the people. And it will not be just the symbolic "ten horns" or "ten kings" of the "wild beast" that will be angry at her. No, the whole beastly organization will learn to hate her, losing their pleasure in her. Therefore, the majority of the member nations of this "wild beast" organization in which she relies for protection will not rescue her when the time comes for Jehovah to execute his judgment upon her. The "ten kings" and the "wild beast" will devastate her of the vast wealth she has gathered in carrying on her religious business. They will strip her naked, that is, they will make her appear shameful as a naked woman in public, that everybody may see how false and useless her religion is and stop superstitiously taking part in it. You will recall how wild beasts, dogs, ate up the fleshy parts of Baalistic Queen Jezebel of Israel, leaving only the palms of her hands and her feet and skull. Likewise, these kings composing the wild beast will devour her body with which they once had liked to unite.

Babylon the Great has had many awesome and lavish ceremonies and rites,

which appeared beautiful to the people, like a beautiful harlot able to give soothing pleasure to ungodly, worldly men. This harlot loved to drink blood, especially the blood of those killed by religious persecution. Her clergy fed themselves and lived off the masses of people under her, but now the tables are turned: the wild beast feeds on her as long as there is anything left of her to eat. Then they will burn the rest of her frame with fire, as if she were not a Babylonian temple prostitute but an unchaste daughter of a priest in ancient Israel. (Lev. 21:9; Gen. 38:24) What this will mean for the religious buildings of Babylon the Great and for her priests and other religious clergy and orders is something frightful to contemplate. We make no attempt to describe it.

WORLDLY RELIGION NO SANCTUARY

It was a terrible sight for John to behold the judgment executed on the harlot in the vision. Truly it will be exceedingly terrible to see the burning hatred vented on her, when the things of the world empire of false religion, formerly considered sacred, will then be held as disgusting. Her churches, which once provided sanctuary for even the worst of criminals, will be looked upon as filthy, abhorrent places. But it will rid the earth forever of accursed Babylon the Great. Compare Jehu's destruction of Baal worship in Israel. —2 Ki. 10:25-27.

What about those who are serving Jehovah God as his Christian witnesses? Well, today they declare the judgments that will come upon Babylon, to give all those who are in her an opportunity to escape the horrible destruction that faces her. Note, however, that they will not join with the "ten horns" in expressing bitter, violent hatred against her and they will have no part whatsoever in destroying her. They have no appointment from Jehovah God to act as his executioners against the empire of Babylonish religion. While the destruction of Babylon the Great is really from God, yet he uses the instruments he chooses to do so. But as to the "ten horns" and the "wild beast," their hatred of false religion does not mean their conversion to true worship of God. No, they will not look with favor upon Jehovah's Christian witnesses. The servants of God will be in danger, liable for attack by the antireligionists. However, unlike the exposed, unprotected condition of Babylon the Great, Jehovah's servants will have an invisible "wall" around them. God Almighty will protect and preserve them through that awesome period of his executing righteous judgment on the great harlot.—Ps. 37: 32-34; compare 2 Kings 6:15-17; Zechariah 2:5; Daniel 3:24-27.

So while one might feel at this time very safe in a religion of Babylon the Great, we can see from the prophecy that God will turn the tables on matters very quickly. Therefore, it is not something that we should view with unconcern, adopting a wait-and-see attitude. Instead of looking upon Babylon the Great as a sanctuary, flee to the true sanctuary, God's Christian organization, by studying God's Word the Bible and taking the action therein commanded. Only in this way will one have a realization of God's promise: "The salvation of the righteous ones is from Jehovah; he is their fortress in the time of distress. And Jehovah will help them and provide them with escape. He will provide them with escape from wicked people and save them, because they have taken refuge in him."—Ps. 37:39, 40.

BY TEACHING, MAKE DISCIPLES OF CHRIST

WHAT many fine examples of how our brothers, by teaching, are making disciples of Christ are found in our *1967 Yearbook!* Are you enjoying them? All this teaching, of course, is being done in obedience to the command Jesus gave his followers just before returning to his heavenly Father: "Make disciples of people . . . teaching them." —Matt. 28: 19, 20.*

A disciple, we are told, is "one who receives instruction from another. One who accepts the doctrines of another and assists in spreading and implementing them." The disciples of Jesus Christ, according to the Bible, are those who accept Jesus' teachings, who understand them and who follow him closely in spreading them.—John 8:31.

What is involved in making disciples? Jesus Christ set the example for us. He took the initiative, going to the people, preaching and teaching wherever he found those willing to listen.

In carrying on this work of making disciples by teaching, the emphasis is on a certain feature of our Christian ministry. We may do a little teaching when we offer Bible magazines on the streets; we may do a little more as we speak at the doorstep while preaching from house to house. But we do much more teaching when we call back on persons who have evinced a measure of interest in God's Word and, most of all, of course, do we teach when we establish a regular home Bible study.

And not only must we carry on this teaching on a personal basis, we must help these prospective disciples to see the need of attending our five weekly congregational meetings. They need the help of these also if they would become Jesus' disciples.

What a privilege to share in this work, to be "God's fellow workers," preaching and teaching the everlasting good news under the direction of Jesus Christ and his holy angels! What a blessing to be permitted to share in this work of making disciples by teaching! Appreciating it, may we serve to the full limit of our strength, time and ability!—1 Cor. 3:9; Rev. 14:6.

* For details see *The Watchtower*, April 1, 1966.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

FIELD MINISTRY

Before his ascension to heaven, the Lord Jesus instructed his followers: "Go therefore and make disciples of people . . . teaching them." (Matt. 28:19, 20) It is in obedience to that command that Jehovah's witnesses call at your door. Yes, they are teachers of the things that are recorded in the Bible, and they offer their personal services free of charge. As a further aid to interested persons, during April they will be offering a year's subscription for this fine Bible-study aid, *The Watchtower*, with three booklets; for just $1. Avail yourself of the opportunity to obtain it.

MAKE THE BIBLE AN OPEN BOOK TO YOU

The Bible is universally acknowledged as the best seller of all times; over two billion copies being distributed in 1,200 languages. Yet it is still a closed book to many. Do you find it so? Many are discouraged from Bible reading by archaic, outdated language and stiff, obscure translation. Now the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures* brings you a new modern version in our everyday speech, opening up the Bible to you. To add to your pleasure and understanding, read also the valuable Bible-study aid *Life Everlasting—in Freedom of the Sons of God.* Both, only $1.50. Send today.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

April 30: The Pattern of Judgment. Page 205. Songs to Be Used: 95, 69.

May 7: God's Judgment Makes Manifest the Truly Rich. Page 212. Songs to Be Used: 100, 104.